1:Layard E-5 (1914-1915) 1942
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together, share approximately the same dialect) and differ considerably one from the other as regards social organisation and ritual observances. These differences all occur nevertheless within certain cultural limits, such as the broad lines of megalithic culture which they all share in common and the matrilineal moieties which persist among them despite the overt patrilocal organisation, as well as many linguistic similarities over and above their common Austronesian basis, these similarities occurring most strikingly in the common use of the same, or approximately the same, terms in connexion with megalithic rites, of which the most obvious is their common use of the word Maki.

Of all these languages, that which differs from the others most is that of Vao, not only in vocabulary but also in pronunciation, since, by a peculiar forward movement of the tongue between the lips, certain consonants take on a very un-Malekulan form, making it difficult at first hearing to distinguish between, for example, *t* and *d*, or *m* and *n*. This is most striking to the European in its effect on the consonant which elsewhere in Malekula is pronounced *w* or *v*, and which in Vao sounds like a voiced *th* (*dh*) very similar to the *th* in the English word *the*. Other sound-changes are that Malekulan *g* is softened to *gh* and Malekulan *s* becomes *h*. A notable example is the pronunciation of the word used for the Guardian Ghost, which in Atchin (which retains the Malekulan consonants) is *Le-saw-saw* and in Vao is *Le-hev-hev*, pronounced in a manner that at first hearing I transcribed as *Le-heth-heth*. This sound *th* is characteristic also of certain tribes on Santo. Since all words in which it occurs can, however, be traced to their parallels on Atchin and elsewhere I do not propose to confuse the philological issue by rendering this aberration in print, and wherever this sound occurs in Vao I shall render it by the more usual Malekulan *v*.

From every one of these coral islets may be seen each morning, when the weather is not too stormy, a fleet of small canoes sailing or paddling to the mainland, where the natives of each island have their gardens. For the islets themselves are too small and their soil too shallow to support their population in garden produce, and are, moreover, largely given over to the rearing of pigs, which in their younger stages (before the tusks have appeared and are therefore liable to be damaged if their owners were allowed to run wild) are permitted to forage where they will. It is this habit that has given rise to the French saying that each island is a *parc au porcs*. This is not true if it be understood as meaning that the islands are a mass of wandering pigs; but is true to the extent that no young succulent plant is secure from the occasional ravages of these animals without very heavy fencing to protect it. For this reason the natives have their main gardens on the adjacent mainland, large tracts of which are regarded as the property of the island immediately facing it, and only certain ceremonial gardens surrounded by carefully